

Building Reconciliation at the U of S

College of Kinesiology, University of Saskatchewan

Saskatchewan Indigenous Youth Mentorship Program (IYMP)

¹Gillian Epp, ¹Leah Ferguson, ²Tammy Girolami, ¹Louise Humbert, ¹Carol Rodgers, and ²Saskatoon Public Schools

¹College of Kinesiology, University of Saskatchewan, ²Saskatoon Public Schools

INTRODUCTION

The IYMP is a healthy living program delivered by youth to younger community peers to promote wellness. The program consists of both a mentor and youth learning component based on the Circle of Courage Framework [Figure 1]. IYMP initially began in Manitoba and is now being offered in 12 communities across Canada, with the Saskatoon program in its initial year of offering.

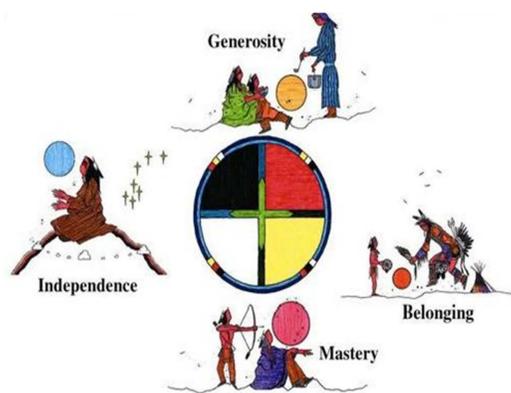


Figure 1. The Circle of Courage Framework Guided by Indigenous teachings and the Indigenous Medicine Wheel approach to wholistic health. The framework is premised on fostering resilience among youth through four universal needs: Belonging, Mastery, Independence, and Generosity.

Youth mentors from diverse settings, backgrounds and Indigenous cultures who have participated in IYMP have identified the impact IYMP had on their lives: specifically, creating and promoting respect in their community, building a sense of belonging, and developing an understanding of the importance of wellness for obesity and type 2 diabetes prevention in children [May 27th and 28th 2015, Manitoba Indigenous youth leaders shared their mentoring experiences with IYMP to a team of scientists, community members, and elders].

Early pilot data from programs in Manitoba [2010-2012] has also shown that those youth who received the program intervention showed positive improvement in: healthy food and physical activity knowledge, waist circumference, and body mass index z-score (Eskicioglu, et al., 2014).

The voices of youth have resonated with the team and our goal is to honour and carry these voices across Canada.

MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

The planning stage: High school mentors and young adult community leaders meet once a week to collaboratively plan twenty sessions of the healthy living program, including healthy snacks, physical activities, and Indigenous teachings.

The implementation stage: Mentors deliver the program of healthy snacks, physical activity, educational activities, and debriefing sharing circles to grade 4/5 students for 50 minutes once or twice a week for 20 sessions.

The sharing stage: Mentors engage in focus groups, photovoice, and Anishinaabe symbol-based reflection to discuss aspects for improvement and program successes to show how mentoring supports Mino-Bimaadiziwin (the way of a good life; Ishpeming'enzaabid-Rheault Bizhiw, 1999)

ASSESSMENT MEASURES

- Height and Sitting Height
- Weight
- Waist and Hip Circumference
- Daily Step Counts



WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED SO FAR

Cultural Activities

Sharing Circle: The students introduced themselves and talk about what they enjoyed at the program.

Creation Story: A creation story was told by a mentor and the significance of creation stories was discussed.

Jigging: The students learned how to dance the Métis jig.

Healthy Snacks

Granola bars, strawberries, oranges

Physical Activities

Name games, "Find a partner" Running game, Octopus, "Everybody's it" Tag

QUOTES

"I like that we are all active and being together."

"The program will definitely help people feel better about themselves."

"I enjoyed seeing people I know."

"I love going to [the school] because we play fun games and eat healthy snacks."

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



Saskatoon Public Schools
Inspiring Learning



CIHR IRSC